

Revelation 13

The Antichrist and the False Prophet Revealed

- Throughout human history we have the recorded names of infamous men who have sought power for themselves by killing their enemies. History is filled with such men . . . Genghis Khan, Josef Stalin, Adolph Hitler, Mao Tse Tung, Kim Il Sung, Vladimir Putin.
 - But here in Revelation 13 we encounter the worst of the worst. During the future seven year Tribulation Satan will raise up and empower a profoundly evil human ruler to be his false messiah, whose mission will be to rule over the earth as Satan's representative and to elicit worship from the whole world.
- In Revelation 11:7 we were first introduced to ***the beast that comes up out of the abyss***. I told you that the phrase, "***coming up out of the abyss***" refers to ***the beast's demonic empowerment, not his location***.
 - Now, here in Revelation chapter 13 we are introduced, in great detail, to **two of the men who will be Satan's representatives on earth during the Tribulation**. The first ***beast***, described in v. 1- 10 is referred to commonly as **the antichrist**.
 - The second man, who will serve the first ***beast***, is referred to in Revelation 13:11 as ***another beast***. This man is referred to later in Revelation 16:13, 19:20 and 20:10 as ***the false prophet***, and he and his function will be described in Revelation 13:11-18.
 - In total, here in Revelation 13 we will see the term, ***the beast***, used in **10 of the 18 verses** as we learn a great deal about what their roles will be during the Tribulation.
- To begin with, in Revelation 13:1 we see the relationship between ***the dragon*** and ***the beast*** . . .

v. 1— And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.

- The phrase ***the sand of the seashore*** is a metaphorical term that refers to **the innumerable multitude of mankind**. We see a similar use in Genesis 22:17, 32:12 and 41:49.

Genesis 22:17— indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as **the sand which is on the seashore**; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

- Here in Revelation 13:1 we see ***the dragon*** standing amidst ***the sand of the seashore***.
 - Then, with the dragon in position among mankind, John introduces us to ***the beast***.

. . . Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.

- The term **beast** (Gr. *thērion*) is a word used to describe a “wild, dangerous or ferocious animal.”
 - The term **beast** is used in Revelation for the **two** antichristian leaders who are destined to control the affairs of the nations through their Satanically given power in the closing period of the present era. In other words, the use of the term **beast** here in v. 1 is representative of **the antichrist and the false prophet** who will lead the end times world political and economic system.
 - Note: It is important to understand that **the beast in Revelation 13 represents both a kingdom and a person**. The description in **v. 1 signifies a worldwide empire, yet the beast is also a person**, since he is described with the personal pronouns *his, him and he*. In addition, Daniel 7:25, 8:24-25, 11:36-45 and 2 Thessalonians 2:4 describe antichrist as a person. Scripture views the final world empire as inseparable from its ruler, much as Hitler is virtually synonymous with the Third Reich.

What Revelation 13:1-10 teach us about *the beast*

- The **first** thing we learn about *the beast* is where he comes from.
 - In v. 1 we see the **beast coming up out of the sea**. This phrase is intended to be interpreted figuratively and not literally. Here in Revelation 13:1 **the sea** is a figurative term referring to “**the sea of humanity**.”
 - As Robert Thomas states, “one hesitates to attach such a figurative meaning, but related texts furnish ground for doing so.” For example, in Daniel 7:2 the prophet Daniel describes the appearance of the four great empires of history . . .

Daniel 7:2— “And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.”

- Several biblical commentators have suggested that this first **beast** will be a man who rises meteorically from relative obscurity to world-wide fame and adulation. If true, this meteoric rise will probably be as a result of the upheaval and uncertainty resulting from the rapture of millions from the earth and the resulting onset of God’s judgments as the Tribulation begins, beginning with the breaking of the first seal judgment.
- **Secondly**, having stated **where** the **beast** comes from . . . **the sea** of humanity . . . John then describes **the authority and power of the beast** in v. 1 . . . **having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names**.
- In the description of **having ten horns**, the **ten horns** represent **ten kings** who act as sub-rulers under the authority of the **beast**. We don’t have to guess this because we are explicitly told this in Revelation 17:12 . . .

Revelation 17:12— “The **ten horns which you saw are **ten kings** who have not yet received a kingdom, but **they receive authority as kings** with the beast for one hour.**

- The imagery here also fits the description we see in Daniel 7:7, 24 . . .

Daniel 7:7— *"After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, **a fourth beast**, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, **and it had ten horns**.*

Daniel 7:24— *'As for the **ten horns**, out of this kingdom **ten kings will arise**; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.*

- In Revelation 13:1 the **seven heads** represent **7 successive world empires**; likely Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and the final end times empire.
 - This matches the revelation that Daniel received in Daniel 2, when he is given the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a gigantic statue.
 - In Daniel 2 we see the description of 5 of these world empires. Since the Egyptian and Assyrian empires had already passed into history, they are not included in the prophecy of future kingdoms.
 - In Daniel 2 we see the kingdoms described . . .

Daniel 2:32-33— *³² The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.*

- From Daniel 2 and its historical fulfillment that the **head of fine gold** represents the **Babylonian empire**, the **breast and arms of silver** represents the **Medo-Persian empire**, the **belly and thighs of bronze** represent the **Greek empire**, and the **legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay** represent the ancient **Roman empire** and the future revived Roman empire.
- In Daniel 2:41-44 we are told what will ultimately happen to the final world empire . . .

Daniel 2:41-44— *⁴¹ And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. ⁴³ And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery. ⁴⁴ And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.*

- Here in Daniel 2:41-44 we are told that Christ will return and crush all the world empires and institute His eternal kingdom here on the earth.
- In addition to the meaning of the **ten horns**, in v. 1 John also reveals that **on his [ten] horns were ten diadems**.

- The term **diadems** is the Greek term *diadēma*, meaning “crowns.” A **crown** is the sign of kingly rank, power and authority.
- The fact that each of the **beast’s horns** has a **crown** indicates that each kingly **horn** possesses power, but that power is subordinate to the **beast**.
- **Third**, at the end of v. 1 we see a description of **the beast’s desire for adulation . . . on his [seven] heads were blasphemous names**.
 - “Roman emperors from the time of Augustus onward illustrate, in a lesser way, what this blasphemy will be. The use of divine titles applied to these emperors and formed in the imperial letters among the inscriptions at Ephesus amounted to blasphemy against God. The magnification of this practice well characterizes the activities of the false christ of the future.
 - In 2 Thessalonians 2 the apostle Paul gives us a lengthy description of **the beast’s** character and actions . . .

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4— *3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, ⁴ who opposes and **exalts himself** above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, **displaying himself as being God**.*

- The act of **displaying himself as being God** is a description of **the abomination of desolation**.
- **Fourthly**, in Revelation 13:2 John describes **the beast’s fearsome and ferocious character . . .**

Revelation 13:2— *And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority*

- Once again we see John use a lot of figurative language to describe the **beast** as he uses the comparative term, **like**. The word **like** indicates that John is using a simile . . . a figure of speech of comparison.
 - For example, siblings who “fight like cats and dogs” don’t really scratch and bite like cats and dogs. It is a phrase that pictures the animosity between cats and dogs that is being used as a comparison. If a person is admired for being able to “swim like a fish,” the person is not actually mimicking a fish, but simply is able to swim fast and skillfully.
 - Here in Revelation 13:2 John describes the characteristics of what the **beast** is like. The **beast is like a leopard, like a bear, and like a lion**.
- But what characteristics of **a leopard, a bear and a lion** does the **beast** possess? Fortunately, we have another parallel passage of Scripture to save us having to guess or assume. The cross reference for Revelation 13:2 is found in Daniel 7:3-7 . . .

Daniel 7:3-7— *3 "And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. ⁴ The first was **like a lion** and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its*

wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. ⁵ And behold, another beast, a second one, **resembling a bear**. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!' ⁶ After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, **like a leopard**, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. ⁷ After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, **a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong**; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it **had ten horns**.

- In our study of Daniel we learned the significance of the characteristics of each animal representing each kingdom.
 - Being **like a leopard** (Gr. *pardalis*) signifies speed. In Daniel 7 and 8 this signified the historical figure, Alexander the Great and the Greek empire, who conquered the world with an almost impossible speed. By the age of 33 Alexander had conquered the known world.
 - Being **like a bear** (Gr. *arktos*) signifies ferocity, strength and the stability of the Medo-Persian empire (Dan. 7:15). The Medo-Persian empire is the second kingdom represented by Nebuchadnezzar's statue in Daniel 2:32. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream the Medo-Persian empire is represented by the belly and thighs of bronze.
 - Being **like a lion** (Gr. *leōn*) signifies the fierce power of the Babylonian empire in Daniel 7:4. This same character is the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:31-35).
- It is interesting to note that the **beast** that John sees incorporates the characteristics of the three beasts in Daniel's vision in Daniel 7:3-7 **but in reverse order**. **This is probably because John is looking back in history, from the most recent to the most ancient, while Daniel was looking forward, with the lion being the first to come and the leopard being later.**
 - Note: the fourth beast in Daniel 7:7 is the worst of the four, described by Daniel as being **dreadful, terrifying, extremely strong, devoured, crush, trampled and it had 10 horns**. This coincides with John's vision in v. 1 and represents the **4th earthly kingdom in Daniel 2:33 being fulfilled**.
- **Fifth**, in the final statement of v. 2 we learn **where the beast derives his power . . .**

Revelation 13:2— . . . And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.

- Here in v. 2 we learn that **the dragon** works through the **beast**. During the Tribulation Satan **is given authority** to empower this one man in a way never before seen in history. **And the reason Satan will be able to empower the beast is because God sovereignly ordains it.**
- The term **power** refers to that which **the dragon** grants or delegates to the **beast**, including power over freedom and life (Rev. 13:10) and the entire business of mankind (13:17) summed up in the occupancy of a throne that grants to the **beast** his earthly kingdom/

- The term **great authority** (Gr. *megas exousia*) refers to **the beast** being granted “world-wide authority” by his patron, Satan.

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- Then, in Revelation 13:3 we come to a significant passage that gives biblical interpreters several difficult interpretive questions . . .

Revelation 13:3— *I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;*

- The interpretive questions provoked by this verse are . . .
 1. Who is the person described as **one of his heads**?
 2. In describing this **head as if it had been slain**, is this an actual death or a deception?
 3. Is Revelation 13:3 describing a **fatal head wound** or a **fatal wound**?
 4. Who performs this miraculous healing/resurrection?

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- **First**, the question, “who is the person described as **one of his heads**?” For help in answering this question we must look down to Revelation 13:12 . . .

Revelation 13:12— *And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship **the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.***

- From Revelation 13:12 and Revelation 17:9-11 we learn that it is antichrist who suffers the **fatal wound** and is brought back to life. It is because of his restoration to life that the world will marvel and worship him as the false christ.
- In v. 3 we are told that **one of his heads** is wounded. This **one head** represents a person that arises as a ruler out of the revived Roman empire. For help, Revelation 17:11 gives us more details . . .

Revelation 17:9-11— *9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, 10 and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. 11 And the beast which was and is not, **is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction.***

- In Revelation 17:10 John records that **five have fallen, one is, the other had not yet come** . . .
 - History records the **five who have fallen**:
 1. **Egypt**— Pharaoh, King of Egypt (Ezekiel 29-30)
 2. **Assyria (Nineveh)**— Nahum 3:1-19
 3. **Babylon**— Nebuchadnezzar (Isaiah 21:9; Jeremiah 50-51)

4. **Persia**—Daniel 10:13, 11:2 (King Xerxes' invasion of Greece ends in disaster)

5. **Greece**— Alexander the Great (Daniel 11:3-4)

○ ... *one is* ...

6. **Roman Empire**— Domitian was Caesar at the time John was exiled on Patmos.

○ ... *the other has not yet come* ...

7. **The Revived Roman Empire of the end times, led by 10 kings**

○ *Revelation 17:11— And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven ...*

8. **Empire of Antichrist**, who rises to power during the reign of the Revived Roman Empire of the end times. As Revelation 17:11 states, **antichrist is part of, or rises from, the 7th empire, to become the 8th.**

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- **Second**, regarding the question, “does the ***fatal wound*** of Revelation 13:3 result in an actual fatality or is this only a deception?”
 - This is a difficult question because the text literally says that ***his death stroke was healed***.
 - The word ***healed*** (Greek: *therapeuō*), from which we get our English word, *therapy* or *therapeutic*, means “to heal, to restore to health, or to cure.” So, although antichrist will suffer a ***death stroke***, he will be “restored to health.”
 - So, is this ***fatal wound*** that results in death or something short of death?
 - Two answers to this question are possible. Either God permits antichrist’s **resurrection** **or** the apparent resurrection is a **deception** perpetrated by Satan.
 - While only God is able to restore life after death, it is likely that God permits this **false resurrection** to occur to permit deception to be perpetrated upon the “earth dwellers.”

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- The **third question** of whether Revelation 13:3 is describing a **fatal head wound** or simply a **fatal wound** is an interesting one.
 - The understanding of this ***fatal wound*** being a ***fatal head wound*** is a common misinterpretation. In reading the phrase, ***one of his heads as if it had been slain***, many people incorrectly interpret that phrase to mean **his head was the location of the fatal wound**, meaning “a fatal head wound.”
 - But if you read verse 3 again, you see that ***one of his heads ... one of the beasts ten heads ... receives a fatal wound***. There is no mention of this being a **fatal head wound**.

- In stating that **the beast** suffers a ***fatal wound as if slain***, the word **slain** (Greek: *sphazō*) means “to butcher or slaughter.” **In other words**, this **wound** is gruesome and severe, making **the beast’s** recovery from such an obviously severe wound even more incredible and miraculous.

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- **Finally**, we have the question of “who performs this miraculous healing?”
 - Once again, the text of Scripture does not tell us who performs this supposed miraculous healing or false resurrection, only that the result of this person being healed is that **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast . . . the beast** being the **antichrist who arises from among the ten kings of the 7th empire**.
 - Several options are most plausible.
 1. Satan heals/resurrects **the beast**. This would mean that God gives, for this one event, the ability to heal an apparently ***fatal wound*** or to raise the dead. In either case, God sovereignly permits this action to accomplish His purposes.
 2. The **beast** is spontaneously resurrected **from death**, without any intervention from men or angels. This would mean that God resurrects and preserves **the beast** to serve God’s purpose in allowing Satan and **the beast** to deceive the unbelieving world.
 3. A miraculous resuscitation occurs **from apparent death** during the course of attempted human medical intervention. In other words, while the ***fatal wound*** would usually have resulted in death, God preserves **the beast’s** life through divine intervention. This apparent miraculous event is credited by the world to **the beast** and not to God.
 - Then, at the end of Revelation 13:3 we see the result of **the beast’s** apparent resurrection from the dead . . . **And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast**.
 - Here in this statement we see that the apparent resurrection of **the beast** from death causes **the whole earth . . .** all unbelievers in the world . . . to not only be ***amazed and astounded by the apparent miracle***, but they flock to and ***followed after the beast***. His return from the dead makes him the object of **the world’s** affection.
 - As Pastor Tom Pennington states, “people will become so captivated, so enamored with this false messiah who appears to have died and been raised from the dead, that they will follow him as his disciples, as if he were the Messiah. That’s the point of antichrist. He’s presenting himself as the Messiah. And many will believe and follow.”

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- But it is **not only the beast** who receives the adulation and worship of **the world**, in Revelation 13:4 we also see that . . .

Revelation 13:4— and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"

- In Revelation 13:4 it is significant to note that **this is the only time in the book of Revelation where worship of the dragon (Satan) is explicitly mentioned.**
 - But even in the statement that *they [the whole earth] worshiped the dragon*, this worship occurs through the *whole earth worshipping the beast*. **In other words**, in worshipping *the beast, the whole earth* is **unknowingly worshipping the power behind the beast . . . Satan.**
 - Unbelievers do not understand that in worshipping antichrist, they are, in fact, worshipping Satan. **And because they wrongly believe antichrist is a divinely empowered messiah, most of the world will unknowingly be worshipping Satan.**
- In v. 4 we then read the words of the *whole world* as *they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"*
 - Here we have a parody on the name *Michael*, who is the guardian angel of Israel (Daniel 12:1), whose name in Hebrew means **"who is like God?"**
 - Such a saying by the worshippers of the beast is intended to mock similar language about God in the Old Testament, such as . . .

Psalm 35:10— All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like Thee, Who delivers the afflicted from him who is too strong for him, And the afflicted and the needy from him who robs him?"

Psalm 113:5— Who is like the LORD our God, Who is enthroned on high

- Of course, the answer to the question, "who is like Yahweh our God?" is no one. But Satan seeks God's glory for himself.
- But the point of the *whole world saying "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"* is that the *whole world* believes that the antichrist is unbeatable. But the true answer will be revealed in Revelation 17:14 and 19:11-21 when the Lamb comes.

Activities of the beast—v. 5-8

Revelation 13:5— And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

- Here in v. 5 we have an occasion in which God sovereignly permits actions by antichrist to speak against Himself. The fact that God permits *the beast* to speak **arrogant words and blasphemies** is affirmed by John when he says that *there was given to him . . .* **In other words**, God permits antichrist to blaspheme Him for the purpose of accomplishing His divine will.
 - In fact, the phrase, **was given to him**, is used twice in v. 5-8 to tell us that God not only sovereignly permits antichrist to blaspheme Him (v. 5-6), but God also permits antichrist's rise to power and brief career of persecution of God's people (v. 7-8).

- We also learn here in v. 5 that God sovereignly places a limit on the time period that antichrist is **permitted** to rule in the world . . . **forty-two months**.
- One of the great lessons in Daniel from which John draws heavily is the sovereignty of God over the world's governments (see Daniel 4:17, 25, 32).
 - The first thing we learn that the antichrist is permitted to do during his 42 month reign is to **speak arrogant words and blasphemies**. We see this same description of the antichrist's actions in Daniel 7:8 (**a mouth uttering great boasts**), Daniel 7:11 (**boastful words**), Daniel 7:20 (**great boasts**), and Daniel 7:25 (**he will speak out against the Most High**).
 - These **boastful words** are boasts about his own greatness and his blasphemies will be evil words spoken against God.
- In telling us that antichrist **is given authority to act for forty-two months**, we again see a period of time that is familiar in prophecy. This specific time . . . **forty-two months** . . . is encountered in Scripture in several forms.
 - In Daniel 7:25 we see this same amount of time expressed as **a time, times, and half a time**.
 - In Revelation 11:3 we saw this same amount of time expressed as **twelve hundred and sixty days**.
 - All three of these periods of time . . . **a time, times, and half a time** . . . **twelve hundred and sixty days** . . . and **forty-two months** . . . are exactly **three and a half years**.

Revelation 13:6— And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

- Then in v. 6 we read that antichrist, like Satan, seeks to exalt himself in the place of God.
 - His actions in speaking against God and against heaven bring to mind God's command upon the nation of Israel who would be so foolish or arrogant as to speak against the Most High . . .

Leviticus 24:16— 'Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

 - To **blaspheme** means "to rail at or revile; to speak contemptuously against God or sacred things."
- Here in Revelation 13:6 antichrist commits **3 specific blasphemies against God**.
 - 1. First, he blasphemes His name.** To commit **blaspheme God's name** means "to demean God directly or appropriate God's name for oneself.
 - 2. Second, he blasphemes His tabernacle.** This means "to speak in a derogatory manner about God's heavenly dwelling place."

3. Third, he *blasphemes those who dwell in heaven*. This blasphemy is not a reference to blaspheming the saints in heaven, but rather, the angelic host of heaven who cast Satan and his demons out (as we saw in Revelation 12:7-9, 12).

told who this person is but we know that this is a person and not the entire 7th beast because the pronoun, **his**, is used to refer to a person, not an impersonal kingdom.

- In committing these blasphemies Satan is passing on his anger and frustration to his protégé. So the beast's blasphemous words are against God and where God and His holy angels reside.
- John MacArthur writes of antichrist, "Antichrist's arrogance will surpass that of anyone else in human history – he will be Satan's mouthpiece, voicing his master's frustrated rage against God. He will be the supreme blasphemer in a world filled with blasphemers."

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- In Revelation 13:7, for a second time, we see that God permits antichrist . . . ***it was given to him*** . . . to have success in his persecution of God's people . . .

Revelation 13:7— And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.

- The wording here in v. 7 is almost the same expression used in Daniel 7:21 to describe antichrist's actions . . .

Daniel 7:21— I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them

- Not only does antichrist mount a worldwide persecution of God's **saints**, but we see here that God gives antichrist **worldwide dominion and domination**.

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- Yet, despite his worldwide oppressive destruction and domination, the world will embrace antichrist . . .

Revelation 13:8— And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

- The response to antichrist's domination over the world is **worldwide worship**. But, as we read in Revelation 13:8, this worship of antichrist **only comes from everyone whose name has not been written in the book of life of the Lamb**.
 - Significantly, note the wording of that phrase . . . ***whose name has not been written***. This speaks of the fact that the recording of names in ***the book of life of the Lamb*** occurred before creation. This verse affirms God's election of those whose ***names are written in the book of life of the Lamb***.
 - The elect will not worship the beast, but ***the earth dwellers*** will.

What is *the book of life of the Lamb*?

- The **book of life** is the registry of God's elect from eternity past . . . before the foundation of the world. It is God's record of all whom He has elected unto salvation.
 - The **book of life** is first referred to after the golden calf event in Exodus 32:32-33, when Moses prays to God on behalf of the sinful Israelites . . .

Exodus 32:32-33— ³² *"But now, if Thou wilt, forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me out from **Thy book** which Thou hast written!"* ³³ *And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of **My book**."*

- David also refers to God's **book of life** in Psalm 69, an imprecatory psalm in which David cries out to God for His protection while he is being pursued by those who wish to kill him . . .

Psalm 69:28— *May they be blotted out of **the book of life**,
And may they not be recorded with the righteous.*

- In Daniel 12:1 we find another Old Testament reference to **the book**, when the archangel Michael tells Daniel . . .

Daniel 12:1— *Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in **the book**, will be rescued.*

- In the New Testament the exact phrase, **the book of life**, is only found 1 time outside of Revelation (Philippians 4:3), but it is referred to in Luke 10:20 and Hebrews 12:23. However, the phrase, **the book of life** is used 6 times in Revelation (3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 20:15, 21:27).
- As we learn in Revelation 13:8, the fact that a person's name is **written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb** is God's promise is that anyone's name who **is in** the Lamb's **book of life**, he will not fall into deception and worship the antichrist. The Holy Spirit will protect and cause His own to persevere, **even for those who have not yet received faith**. The elect will be kept from falling into idolatry of the beast.

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- Then, in Revelation 13:9-10 we have a word of encouragement and instruction to those Christians who will be alive to see these events take place . . .

Revelation 13:9-10— ⁹ *If anyone has an ear, let him hear.* ¹⁰ *If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.*

- While the phrase **he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches** was a **present call** to learn from the Lord's instruction to the seven churches in Asia, **here in**

Revelation 13:9 we see a future call . . . a call to look forward to the time when this prophecy is fulfilled.

- Remember, a multitude of Christians will receive faith during the Tribulation. And because they have this book of Revelation, they will know what lies ahead. This command in v. 9 is given as a word of encouragement to God's people in the Tribulation regarding their proper response to this future threat of idolatry and a reminder that God is sovereign over it.
- Then, having exhorted the saints to learn from God's prophetic word regarding these things, in v. 10 God tells His people that severe persecution will come upon them.
 - The translation doesn't properly convey God's warning in v. 10. The best manuscripts read, ***if anyone is for captivity, into captivity he departs; if anyone is to be killed by the sword, it is necessary for him to be killed by the sword.***
 - What John is saying is that God has ordained **all** things, whether it be captivity or death, and that the believer is to rest and find encouragement in God's sovereign control over their lives.
- Revelation 13:10 closes with the instruction and exhortation . . . ***here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.***
 - The close of v. 10 names the personal qualities needed to sustain believers in the face of harsh treatment, including death . . . ***perseverance and faith.***
 - In this case, ***perseverance*** is found in resting and trusting in God's sovereignty, through ***faith.***
 - The pressure of the times will require ***perseverance*** because of the persecution by antichrist and ***faith*** to remain firm in the dark times until his or her eventual doom. Remembering that God is sovereign over all that happens is that the dragon and the beast have only a short time, will provide the incentive to sustain these spiritual qualities.

The Second Beast rises—v. 11-18

- Then, having given us a great deal of significant information about **the antichrist** in Revelation 13:1-10, in v. 11-18 we are introduced to a new player in the action . . . **the false prophet.**

Revelation 13:11— And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.

- Continuing his revelation of the unholy trinity of chapter 13, in v. 11 John begins the next section of Revelation 13 with the phrase, ***and I saw***, once again marking this section as a new scene in this vision that began back in chapter 12:1.
- Here in this new scene John sees ***another beast coming up out of the earth.***
 - The word ***another*** (*allos*) means "another of the same kind" . . . a man.

- The phrase ***up out of the earth*** signifies inferiority, compared to the earlier phrase in v. 1 describing ***a beast coming up out of the sea***. In the minds of the ancients, no terrestrial animal could compare in magnitude with the monsters of the sea. Remember, ***sea*** is translated as ***abyss***, the place of the demons. This ***beast***, therefore, is inferior in power, as compared to the ***first beast*** who came ***up out of the sea*** (13:1).
- As we will see, this ***second beast*** has a secondary or supporting role to the ***first beast***. Although he is not called it here in Revelation 13, in Revelation 16:13, 19:20 and 20:10 he is entitled ***the false prophet***.
- John then describes ***the false prophet*** in v. 11 as having ***two horns like a lamb***.
 - Where we previously saw in Revelation 5:6 that ***the Lamb of God*** has ***seven horns***, and ***the beast*** has ***ten horns*** (13:1), here this new, second ***beast*** has a lesser number of horns, indicating that while he is powerful, he has less power than antichrist. In fact, as we will see, ***the purpose of the false prophet's power will be to serve and support antichrist***.
 - The fact that the ***false prophet*** is described as having ***two horns like a lamb*** indicates that while he appears humble, ***like a lamb***, he is very dangerous. This description calls to mind the Lord's admonition in Matthew 7:15 . . .

Matthew 7:15— Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

- And while he may initially appear to be humble and mild, he will actually be a wolf in sheep's clothing, as John states, ***and he spoke as a dragon***.
 - This statement affirms that although his mannerisms may appear gentle, his words are satanic. While he will lack the power that antichrist possesses, he will be powerful in cunning and corrupting influence. The false prophet will not use blustering fierceness, but deception, subtlety and seductive speech to lure people away from faith in Christ and into the dragon's trap.
 - It is because of this appearance of gentleness and humble appearance that many scholars of the past have pointed to a man like the Catholic Pope as a model of such seduction and false humility. But if you look past the appearance and listen to what he teaches, you realize that he speaks as ***a dragon***, leading people astray.
 - Just as Satan disguises himself as ***an angel of light*** (2 Cor. 11:14), so will the ***false prophet***.

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- Then, in v. 12, John reveals ***what it is that the false prophet does . . . he exercises all the authority of the first beast*** and ***makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast***.

Revelation 13:12— And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

- Here we see that the actions of the **false prophet** are overseen by the **antichrist**. Such a relationship is comparable to the relationship between **Moses and Aaron**. They are a team, with the **false prophet** doing the **antichrist's** bidding.
- One of the most significant roles the **false prophet** has is to **make the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed**.
 - From this statement it appears that the resurrection/miraculous healing of antichrist's **fatal wound** is the major event that **the false prophet** uses to give credence to and grounds upon which the **earth dwellers** will elevate and worship the antichrist.
 - As Tom Pennington says, "**The dynamic appeal of the False Prophet will lie in his skill in combining political expediency with religious passion**. His arguments will be subtle, convincing and appealing. His oratory will be hypnotic, for he will be able to move the masses to tears, or to whip them into a frenzy. He will control the communication and media of the world and will skillfully organize mass publicity to promote his ends. He will manage the truth with guile beyond words, bending it, twisting it, and distorting it. He will mold world thought and shape human opinion like so much potter's clay."

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- John then goes on to reveal more of what the **false prophet** will do.

Revelation 13:13— And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.

- This statement affirms Paul's warning of the coming deluding influence in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12.

2 Thessalonians 2:7-12— 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

- What is the purposes of the **false prophet performing great signs**? It is Satan's work to authenticate antichrist and to deceive the world into worshipping the beast.
- One of the **great signs** the false prophet performs is that **he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men**.
- Just as Elijah called down fire from heaven on several occasions (1 Kings 18:37-38; 2 Kings 1:10, 12), so the false prophet receives power to **make fire come down out of heaven to the earth**.
- Note the Lord's warning in Matthew 24:24 . . .

Matthew 24:24— "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect."

- The deception of being able to **make fire come down out of heaven** will be so impressive, it will very nearly **mislead, if possible, even the elect**. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that preserves the elect from falling for this deception.
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Revelation 13:14— And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

- In Revelation 13:14 we learn that the false prophet is able to successfully **deceive those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast**. The supernatural signs that he is able to perform are so impressive and convincing, the world follows after and worships the antichrist.
- Note in v. 14 that **the signs** the **false prophet** performs are **given him to perform**. The use of the passive voice . . . **given him** . . . indicates that this power to perform miraculous **signs** is **given and permitted, not from Satan, but from God**.
 - Natural man has no power to perform any supernatural events without divine permission.
- And having successfully deceived **those who dwell on the earth** (the earth dwellers, aka: unbelievers), the false prophet then commands them **to make an image of the beast**.
 - This **image of the beast** reminds us of the great statue Nebuchadnezzar builds in Daniel 3.

Revelation 13:15— And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

- In v. 15 John reveals that **by divine permission** the false prophet **is given the power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak**.
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Question: Will **the image of the beast** actually come alive and speak or is this a deception?

- Here in this verse we learn that the false prophet is given the ability to make the **image of the beast appear** to be alive. And while the **image of the beast** is magically animated, it is not actually alive, though the world will believe it to be.
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- Then, in the second part of v. 15 we learn the purpose for the animation of the **image of the beast . . . to cause the world to worship of the image of the beast**.
 - Worship of the image of the beast becomes a requirement of all the people. And those who refuse to worship the image of the beast are **killed**, just as we saw in Daniel 3:1-11.
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Question: How is the *false prophet* able to deceive the whole world into worshipping *the beast*?

- The worldwide deception and resulting worship of *the beast* will be made possible for several reasons.

1. Because Satan will be actively involved in promoting and accomplishing the deception. After all, that is what he does.

2 Corinthians 4:4— the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2. The world of unbelievers hates God and is rebellious towards God and the Savior. The world will happily worship something or someone other than the true God. As 2 Thessalonians 2:10 states . . .

2 Thessalonians 2:10— and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

3. The world will worship *the beast* because *the false prophet* will *be given* both **power to perform signs**, but will also be gifted with **persuasive speech**. He will be a gifted orator.

4. Finally, and most importantly, the world will worship *the beast* as a form of **divine judgment**. As we read in 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 . . .

*2 Thessalonians 2:11-12— ¹¹ And for this reason **God will send upon them a deluding influence** so that they might believe what is false, ¹² in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.*

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- This *worship of the image of the beast* is the precursor to **taking the mark of the beast**, which occurs in v. 16 . . .

Revelation 13:16-17— ¹⁶ And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, ¹⁷ and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

- In v. 16 John reveals that the false prophet is able to enforce an edict that *all*, without regard or respect of a person's station in life, is required to take **a mark on their right hand or on their forehead**.
 - Just as God sealed the 144,000 witnesses with a sign on their foreheads (Rev. 7:3), so the followers of the forces of evil take the sign of their god on their **right hand or forehead**.
 - Regarding this **mark of the beast**, the word **mark** (Gr. *charagma*) means "a stamp, imprint or brand." There has been much discussion regarding what form this **mark of the beast** might take. A tattoo? A microchip? We don't know for sure, yet.

- In Asia Minor, in the time of John, pagan religions often used a tattoo as an emblem of ownership by their pagan deity. Whatever form the **mark** takes, it will be visible and recognizable.

Question: What are the consequences for those who **take the mark of the beast**?

- It must be understood and emphasized that **taking the mark of the beast crosses a line and is an action that cannot be undone**. Those who take *the mark of the beast* are condemned.
- *The mark of the beast* is mentioned **6 times in Revelation**. In all 6 instances it refers to those who worship *the beast*. And, as we see in Revelation 14:9-11 ...

Revelation 14:9-11— *9 And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

- The purpose of this **mark** is to **prove allegiance** to antichrist. And once taken, it cannot be removed. Therefore, **the taking of the mark of the beast has eternal consequences. It is an action that cannot undone.**
- So, we learn here that it will not be possible to say "I didn't really mean it. I had my fingers crossed." Taking *the mark of the beast* forever marks a person out for judgment.

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- But to ensure that there is worldwide compliance with the edict to take *the mark of the beast* and to worship him, in Revelation 13:17 we see how *the false prophet* incentivizes compliance and punishes non-compliance.

Revelation 13:17— *and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.*

- In the original text the rendering of the final phrase literally reads, *except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast that is the number of his name.*
 - In other words, without the *mark of the beast* it will be impossible to engage in any trade.
 - Note that under the **third seal** (Rev. 6:5-6) **famine** made it extremely difficult to obtain the necessities of life. But here in Revelation 13:17 we learn that **deprivation of the necessities of life is a tool of antichrist to compel worship and obedience and to punish God's faithful for their loyalty to the Lamb.**
- In the phrase *the name of the beast that is the number of his name*, the **mark** is the *name of the beast* or his name's equivalent in numbers.

- Finally, in Revelation 13:18 we are told who ***the beast*** is. He will be identifiable by ***the number of his name***.

Revelation 13:18— Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

- Much ink has been spilled and many words have been spoken trying to explain what the ***mark of the beast*** is or what numbers could represent the ***name of the beast***. But all efforts are only conjecture and futile. But God does want His faithful to discern what the ***name and number of the beast is***. But only those who have need of understanding will receive discernment. With this in mind, John then closes this section with the words, ***Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast . . .***
 - ***When the time comes and understanding is necessary, God will provide the wisdom and understanding*** needed to ***calculate the number of the beast***. But until that time, that wisdom and understanding will remain secret.
 - The ***wisdom and understanding*** to discern the ***number of the beast*** will be given by the Holy Spirit. We see this same message to God's faithful in Daniel 12:10 as Daniel receives his prophetic message of end times events . . .

Daniel 12:10— "Many will be purged, purified and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but *those who have insight will understand*.

- In v. 18 we are told that the one ***who has understanding*** will be able to ***calculate the number of the beast*** and that calculation will yield a number of ***666***.
 - This number, 666, has two important meanings.
 1. First, it is the number of man. While 7 is God's number of perfection and completion, 6 is man's number of imperfection and incompleteness. So, 666 is symbolic of man's imperfection in this instance. Antichrist, despite his efforts and desires, is not God.
 2. Second, 666 is the calculated number of antichrist's name discerned by assigning a numerical value to each letter of his name.
 - In ancient times each letter of the alphabet had a numerical value. When the numerical value of each letter in a word or name was calculated, you would come up with a total number. Using this technique it will be possible, in the future, to confirm the identity of ***the beast*** by assigning numerical values to his name and the total value to his name will add up to 666.
 - The problem with trying to figure out who the antichrist is in advance by calculating the numerical value of his name is that there are tens of thousands of possible combinations that can add up to 666. ***Therefore, the number of the beast's name will only be able to be calculated and confirmed once he has been revealed.***